

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00

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R 291819Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6255

INFO USDOC WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: AIR FRANCE REPLACEMENT OF ITS CARAVEL-  
LES

1. IN RADIO INTERVIEW JANUARY 27, GILBERT PEROL,  
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF AIR FRANCE, WAS ASKED WHETHER  
MERCURE MIGHT BE SUITABLE REPLACEMENT FOR OLD CARAVELLES  
WHICH AIR FRANCE IS ANXIOUS TO RETIRE SOON FROM ITS  
FLEET. PEROL SAID THAT MERCURE DID NOT SUIT AIR FRANCE  
NEEDS, WHICH WERE FOR AN AIRCRAFT OF SMALLER CAPACITY  
THAN MERCURE FOR USE ON MEDIUM-RANGE ROUTES SUCH AS  
PARIS-ATHENS. PEROL SAID THAT AIR FRANCE THEREFORE FELT  
THAT BOEING 737'S OR DOUGLAS DC-9'S WOULD BETTER SUIT  
ITS NEEDS.

2. COMMENT: BOEING REPS WERE VERY CONCERNED A FEW  
WEEKS BACK OVER RUMOR THEY HAD HEARD TO EFFECT THAT  
DOUGLAS MIGHT BE TRYING TO CRACK BOEING MONOPOLY OF  
AIR FRANCE MARKET BY OFFERING TO GO TO BECOME MARKETING  
REPRESENTATIVE IN US FOR AIRBUS IF IN EXCHANGE AIR FRANCE  
WOULD BUY DOUGLAS EQUIPMENT. WHEN WE ASKED REHM OF  
MCDONNELL DOUGLAS SALES STAFF ABOUT THIS WHEN HE WAS  
PASSING THROUGH PARIS LAST WEEK, HE CLAIMED TO BE UN-  
INFORMED. HOWEVER, WHAT SUGGESTED TO HIM THAT THERE  
MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO THE RUMOR WAS THE PRESENCE IN  
PARIS AT THE SAME TIME OF TWO SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENTS

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OF MCDONNELL DOUGLAS ON HUSH-HUSH BUSINESS OF WHICH

REHM HAD BEEN KEPT IN THE DARK. (REHM SAID THAT HE HIMSELF HAD NOT CALLED AT AIR FRANCE, THOUGH HE HAD CONTACTED AIR CHARTER INTERNATIONAL, WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF AIR FRANCE, IN EFFORT INTEREST THEM IN DC-9'S TO REPLACE CARAVELLES). SENIOR DOUGLAS OFFICIALS COULD, OF COURSE, HAVE BEEN MAKING STRAIGHT SALES PITCH TO AIR FRANCE, WITHOUT ANY TIE-IN WITH AIRBUS. WE HAVE NOT SOUGHT TO DELVE INTO ABOVE WITH FRENCH SOURCES IN ORDER NOT TO RISK MUDDYING THE WATERS OR GETTING CAUGHT IN POSSIBLE CROSSFIRE BETWEEN THE TWO AMERICAN CONSTRUCTORS.

3. RE MERCURE, STORIES CONTINUE TO CROP UP IN THE PRESS ABOUT ITS POSSIBLE USE AS FLYING TEST BENCH FOR GE-SNECMA CFM-56 ENGINE OR EVENTUAL REDESIGN OF MERCURE IN VERSION POWERED BY CFM-56 ENGINES AND HAVING EXTENDED RANGE. PEROL IN ABOVE INTERVIEW, WAS NOT VERY FLATTERING TOWARDS MERCURE, HOWEVER. WHEN INTERVIEWER REMARKED IT SEEMED "INCONCEIVABLE" THAT FIRM SUCH AS DASSAULT WOULD (WITH GOF ASSISTANCE) LAUNCH MERCURE PROJECT WITHOUT FIRST HAVING CHECKED WITH AIRLINES AS TO KIND OF AIRCRAFT THEY MIGHT NEED AND DESIRE, PEROL DRYLY AGREED THAT IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE AND HE SAID NO MORE.

4. PEROL ALSO NOTED THAT AIR FRANCE HAD NEVER BEEN CONSULTED IN ADVANCE BY THE GOF ON CONCOREDE, AND HE QUESTIONED SOUNDNESS OF POLICY THAT WOULD IMPOSE ON A CARRIER ANY AIRCRAFT THAT MIGHT NOT BE RESPONSIVE TO ITS NEEDS.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AIRCRAFT SALES, NEGOTIATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 JAN 1975  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Film Number:** D750033-0695  
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**Office:** ACTION EB  
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**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
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**TAGS:** EAIR, FR, AIR FRANCE, MC DONNELL DOUGLAS, (PEROL, GILBERT)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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